

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00

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R 221735Z SEP 75

FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9586

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS 1084

AMCONSUL BREMEN

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PASS AGRICULTURE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, EEC

SUBJECT: TOBACCO CLASSIFICATION PROBLEM

REF (A) STATE 212489 (B) EC BRUSSELS 5975

1. ON SEPTEMBER 19 WE MET WITH JANSSENS (HEAD, ADMINISTRATION OF THE CXT)
AND SEVERAL MEMBERS OF HIS STAFF INCLUDING SANDRO FORCHERI, A CHEMIST
. WE
WENT OVER THE POINTS SPECIFIED IN REF A, STRESSING THAT US
EXPORT CERTIFICATION OF TOBACCO WAS NOT FEASIBLE; IN PARTICULAR,
WE EXPLAINED WHY THE SO-CALLED HYBRID SYSTEM (REF B) COULD NOT
BE USED. WE RENEWED OUR OFFER TO ARRANGE A MEETING OF COMMISSION
AND EC EXPOERTS.

2. COMMISSION OFFICIALS SPENT A GOOD PORTION OF THE MEETING
BEMOANING THE PROBLEMS THAT PROPER CLASSIFICATION OF TOBACCO
WOULD CAUSE EC CUSTOMS OFFICIALS
AND POINTING OUT HOW MUCH AN EXPORT CERTIFICATE WOULD EASE
THIS TASK. WE INDICATED THAT AT LEAST IN SOME MEMBER STATES THE
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PROBLEM DID NOT APPEAR TO BE SO GREAT -- THE BILL OF LADING

WAS RELIED ON TO FURNISH THE NECESSARY INFORMATION BACKED BY OCCASIONAL PHYSICAL INSPECTIONS TO CHECK FOR DISCREPANCY. COMMISSION OFFICIALS SAID THAT THIS PROCEDURE, WHICH WAS RECOGNIZED AS THAT OF THE UK, WAS NOT LOOKED UPON FAVORABLY BY "CONTINENTAL" CUSTOMS OFFICIALS. WE AGAIN STRESSED THAT DETAILED INQUIRIES BY THE US GOVERNMENT SHOWED THAT THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF CERTIFYING EXPORTS. HOWEVER, WE OFFERED TO HELP THEM IN WHATEVER WAY WE CAN TO DEVELOP EASILY DISCERNIBLE CRITERIA FOR CUSTOMS CLASSIFICATION.

3. CONSIDERABLE INTEREST WAS EXPRESSED IN THE JOURNAL ARTICLE ON THE CHEMICAL ANALYSIS OF TOBACCO, PARTICULARLY BY FORCHER. A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC QUESTIONS WERE RAISED RE THE ARTICLE (SEE PARAGRAPH 4). WE NOTED THAT THESE QUESTIONS WERE QUITE TECHNICAL AND THAT THIS PROBLEM COULD ONLY BE EFFECTIVELY DISCUSSED AT THE EXPERT LEVEL, BRINGING UP AGAIN THE PROSPECT OF A TRIP TO WASHINGTON. JANSSENS AGREED THAT EVENTUALLY SUCH A MEETING COULD BE ARRANGED BUT THAT THE TIME WAS NOT YET RIPE. THE COMMISSION MUST FIRST DISCUSS THE ISSUE WITH THE MEMBER STATES, APPARENTLY IN THE COMMON CUSTOMS TARIFF NOMENCLATURE COMMITTEE. IN ADDITION, JANSSENS PLANS TO SEND THE JOURNAL ARTICLE TO NATIONAL AUTHORITIES FOR THEIR REVIEW. WE ASKED HIM TO KEEP US INFORMED AS TO EC PROGRESS ON THE CLASSIFICATION PROBLEM AND SAID THAT, IN THE MEANTIME, WE WOULD REQUEST INFORMATION ON TECHNICAL QUESTIONS RAISED IN THE DISCUSSION.

4. REQUEST USDA RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE JOURNAL ARTICLE:

A. RE FIGURE 1, P. 1376, WOULD ALL FLUE-CURED TOBACCO FALL UNDER 50 PERCENT CIGAR CHARACTER AND ALL AIR-CURED BE ABOVE 50 PERCENT?

B. WHERE WOULD SUN-CURED AND FIRE-CURED TOBACCOS PLACE ON THE ABOVE-MENTIONED CHART? ARE THESE OF ANY IMPORTANCE IN US TRADE?

C. CAN THE TESTS DESCRIBED IN THE ARTICLE (OR OTHER TESTS) BE USED TO DETERMINE THE TYPE OF TOBACCO (I.E., VIRGINIA, BURLEY, ETC).? IF SO, CAN THESE TESTS BE USED EQUALLY WITH TOBACCO IN LEAF OR IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STRIPS?

D. P. 1378 MENTIONS PRELIMINARY DATA FOR UNAGED BURLEY AND SEVERAL OTHER TOBACCOS. HAVE THESE DATA NOW BEEN FINALIZED? ARE FURTHER RESULTS NOW AVAILABLE? GREENWALD

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